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SUBJECT: US PARTNER CHOSEN TO LEAD INFLUENTIAL CHAMBER OF  
COMMERCE

[11](#). (U) On January 6, the Sana'a Chamber of Commerce and Industry elected Hassan Al-Kbous as the Chairman of the Chamber following the death of previous Chairman Sheikh Mahfoudh Shammakh. Sheikh Mahfoudh Shammakh, sometimes called the Wiseman of the Yemeni Traders, died of a heart attack on January 1 at the age of 74. As the Chairman of the Sana'a Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the CEO of Shammakh Trading Group, Sheikh Shammakh was a giant of Yemeni business. Shammakh was known for his generosity in founding charity associations and for his activism in speaking out against corruption. The funeral of Sheikh Shammakh was attended by thousands, including the Foreign Minister, the Minister of Oil and Minerals, the Chairman of the Supreme National Authority to Combat Corruption, senior Islah opposition leaders, and prominent business figures. ECONOFF witnessed first hand the massive throng of well wishers at a condolence reception.

[12](#). (U) As the Chairman of the Sana'a Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Shammakh was an effective partner for improving US-Yemeni commercial relations and an advocate for government transparency and accountability. Al-Kbous is already a key partner of the Post Commercial/Econ section, a well-known and respected Yemeni businessman, and a participant in an August 2007 Post-sponsored trade delegation to South Carolina.

[13](#). (U) The Sana'a Chamber of Commerce and Industry has been extremely supportive of Post's Econ/Commercial priorities. The Chamber was essential in organizing the visit of the American trade delegation that visited Yemen in December of [12](#)2006. At Post's request, the Sana'a Chamber brokered a deal for payment of an outstanding bill of \$27,000 owed to the US-based National US-Arab Chamber of Commerce by a different Yemeni Chamber.

COMMENT

[14](#). (U) Post's Econ/Commercial activities have been greatly advanced through the cooperation and support of the Sana'a Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Post expects its excellent relationship with the Chamber and the Yemen business community as a whole to grow even stronger with the election of Chairman Al-Kbous. END COMMENT  
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